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LOCAL NEWS

Culinary luncheon boasts recipes by featured West Texas Book Festival authors

By *Janet Van Vleet* of the Abilene Reporter News

Updated: **Yesterday 4:57 p.m.**

The TSTC Culinary Institute rang with conversation Thursday as dozens of diners gathered to feast on Grilled Steak Pinwheels, Salad Puffballs and Pasta with Sun-Dried Tomatoes and Spinach.

The Culinary Cuisine Luncheon is a part of the weeklong West Texas Book Festival.

Volunteers from local organizations served as the waitstaff.

The lunch menu came from the cookbooks of four featured authors — Jacqueline Cavender ("As the Spur Spins"), Melissa Guerra ("The Texas Provincial Kitchen"), and Laura Samuel Meyn and Anthony Head ("Meatless in Cowtown: A Vegetarian Guide to Food and Wine, Texas Style").

Cavender (yes, of Cavender's Western Wear) spoke at the beginning and let everyone know that proceeds from her book were going to the American Cancer Society and the Cystic Fibrosis Society.

Her book features recipes from her mother and mother-in-law, close friends and celebrities such as musician Pat Green, former First Lady Laura Bush and actor Dennis Quaid.

Also speaking before lunch began was Guerra, who grew up and lives on a working cattle ranch along the border between Texas and Mexico.

"My family's been there for a long time," she said. "My maiden name is McAllen, so that tells you how long."

Dessert was peach cobbler, from "The Texas Provincial Kitchen."

Meyn spoke to the crowd, explaining that she and Head met while working at Bon Appétit, a culinary magazine. She said the cookbook includes recipes from her husband and Head's wife, as well as from the two authors.

"It's what we cook, eat and drink when we're together," Meyn said.

About Janet Van Vleet

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